

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of branding a computer program comprising the acts of:
- 5 receiving an indication that a first copy of a computer program has been downloaded to a first computing device and that said first copy is to be branded with information associated with a first entity;
- transmitting first data indicative of said first entity to said first computing device;
- 10 receiving said first data from said first computing device; and providing first branding instructions to said first computing device.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said providing act comprises:
- 15 providing instructions to said first computing device which cause said first copy of said computer program to display a logo associated with said first entity.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein said providing act comprises:
- 20 providing instructions to said first computing device which cause said first program to display a first link to a web site associated with said first entity.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein said act of providing first branding instructions further comprises:
- 25 providing instructions to said first computing device which affect the placement of said first link among one or more second links.
5. The method of claim 1, further comprising the act of:

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providing a directory to said first computing device, said directory including a first link to a web site associated with said first entity.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein said act of providing a directory to said first
5 computing device comprises:

providing a first page which includes said link to said first web site; and
providing a second page which includes one or more links to one or
more second web sites different from said first web site.

10 7. The method of claim 6, wherein said first page includes a link to said first web site
and does not include any other links to any other web site.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising the acts of:

receiving an indication that a second copy of said computer program has
15 been downloaded to a second computing device and that said second copy is to be
branded with a second entity different from said first entity;

transmitting second data indicative of said second entity to said second computing device;

receiving said second data from said second computing device; and
20 providing second branding instructions to said first computing device,
said second branding instructions being different from said first branding instructions.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein said transmitting act comprises:

setting a cookie on said first computing device.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said act of receiving said first data from said first computing device comprises receiving said cookie.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein said first entity is a retailer.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein said first entity is a distributor.

5 13. The method of claim 1, wherein said first entity is a wholesaler.

14. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions to perform the method of claim 1.

10 15. A method of branding a computer program that has been provided to a first computing device by a first entity, comprising the acts of:

receiving information indicative of a first entity;

providing branding data based on said received information to a first computing device for durable storage on said first computing device;

15 following said act of providing branding data, receiving said stored branding data from said first computing device; and

providing branding instructions to said first computing device based on said received branding data.

20 16. The method of claim 15, wherein said receiving act comprises:

receiving said information indicative of a first entity from a second entity identified in an image hidden within a web page.

25 17. The method of claim 16, wherein said second entity causes a cookie to be set on said first computing device.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein said cookie contains information specific to a branding device.

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19. The method of claim 17, wherein said cookie contains information identifying said branding instructions to be downloaded to said first computing device.

5 20. The method of claim 15, wherein said act of providing branding data further comprises sending said cookie from said first computing device.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein said cookie comprises information indicative of said first entity.

10 22. The method of claim 20, wherein said cookie comprises information associated with a second computing device.

15 23. The method of claim 15, further comprising receiving a fee from said first entity as a pre-condition for providing either said branding data or said branding instructions.

24. The method of claim 15, wherein said act of providing branding instructions comprises instructing said first computing device as to the manner in which a link to a network address is to be displayed on a list of network addresses.

20 25. The method of claim 24, further comprising limiting the set of said network addresses on said list.

26. The method of claim 24, further comprising providing data on a list of network addresses automatically.

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27. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions to perform the method of claim 15.

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28. A method for distributing a variation of software through one of a plurality of entities, comprising:

providing a standardized version of software; and

5 providing a customized version of said software as a function of one of a plurality of entities.

29. A system for branding a computer program comprising:

a first computing device which comprises:

10 a memory which stores branding instructions for one of a plurality of entities;

a network interface communicatively coupled to a computer network;

and

15 logic which communicates one of a plurality of sets of branding instructions to a second computing device through said network interface.

30. The system of claim 29, wherein said logic causes said instructions to be stored on a second computing device.

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